

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

LTRC No. 14-2SA, SIO No. 30001662

FACTORS INFLUENCING SEATBELT UTILIZATION IN LOUISIANA AND STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE USAGE RATE

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Louisiana's seat belt usage rate continues to lag behind the average rate for the rest of the United States. A significant number (approximately 65%) of Louisiana's traffic-related fatalities involve an unrestrained vehicle occupant. If the 2013 seat belt usage rate of 82.5% could be raised to the national average of 86%, an estimated 8 lives could be saved for each percentage point increase. It is estimated that unbelted fatalities and injuries costs the citizens of Louisiana \$988,874,140 per year.

This research should include a thorough description and analysis of seat belt use rate and characteristics of users and non-users by demographic groups to provide a representative characterization of at-risk groups and priority geographic areas. Analysis of existing data will provide a foundation and additional data may be collected through additional surveys, focus groups, etc. Research activities may include a comparison of Louisiana to other below average use rate states, as well as those with higher rates to identify opportunities to develop initiatives to improve usage rates. Best practices from high performing states, which are states that achieve a 90% seat belt usage rate, should be identified and evaluated for potential application in Louisiana. Short and long-term methodologies and strategies will be developed.

The results of this research will serve to guide the comprehensive implementation of the Louisiana Strategic Highway Safety Plan by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) and the Highway Safety Plan by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC) and other safety stakeholders in its implementation of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) program requirements per MAP-21. The usage profiles will be useful at a regional and local level for safety coalitions, safety advocates and other groups working to increase seat belt and occupant protection use. A specific example might be to examine ideas related to seat belt use behavior by pickup drivers and passengers. Determine who, when, where, and why pickup drivers and passengers in Louisiana do not buckle up and what is most likely to affect their behavior.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this project is to determine factors influencing seat belt utilization in Louisiana and strategies to improve usage rate. The research is anticipated to encompass, at a minimum, the following tasks:

TASK 1 - Literature Review

This will include a literature search of previous and on-going research projects and case studies on the subject and at a minimum, a search on the Transportation Research Information Services (TRIS), NHTSA, Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and state databases.

TASK 2 – Data Collection

This will include a review over the past 6 to 10 years of the major statewide and regional/local programs, activities, and funding levels that support Louisiana's occupant protection efforts, including state level education, enforcement, and outreach funded through LHSC and LA DOTD. Data elements may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Enforcement activities (i.e. seat belt violations, number of checkpoints, nighttime enforcement, etc.)
2. Media exposure (i.e. reach, frequency, gross rating points, etc.)
3. Number of grants
4. Funding by categories
5. Observational and attitudinal surveys
6. Number of unbelted fatalities and serious injuries
7. Type and frequency of other programs (i.e. Rock the Belt, safety events, etc.)
8. Legislation

TASK 3 – Interim Report

This will include a report on the literature review (Task 1) and data collection (Task 2) results.

TASK 4 – Data Analysis

This will include an analysis over the past 6 to 10 years of the major statewide and regional/local programs, activities, and funding levels that support Louisiana’s occupant protection efforts, including state level education, enforcement, and outreach funded through LHSC and LA DOTD. Additionally, identify trends and relationships between the programs/activities and seat belt usage rates.

TASK 5 – Demographic Characteristics Analysis

Identify targeted demographics using socioeconomic factors based on an analysis of Louisiana-specific data developed in previous tasks. Include a relative comparison of primary enforcement states and high-performing states. Focus groups, surveys, and other data collection methods may be used to sufficiently define targeted demographics.

TASK 6 – Identify Best Practices

Identify best practices from high-performing states for potential applications in Louisiana. Develop short and long-term methodologies and strategies, including legislative initiatives.

TASK 7 - Prepare Final Report

The research team will prepare a final report to document the entire research effort. The final report should include all the data and results generated by this study. The research team is expected to present the research results to LA DOTD personnel and other stakeholders at the conclusion of the study.

SPECIAL NOTES

- A. LTRC research projects will be conducted in accordance with the LTRC Manual of Research Procedures, 2003 edition. (http://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/pdf/research_man03.pdf)
- B. Task descriptions are intended to provide a framework for conducting the research. Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC) is seeking the insight of proposers on how best to achieve the research objectives. Proposers are expected to describe research plans that can be realistically accomplished within the constraints of available funds and contract time as highlighted on page 3. Proposals must present the candidate’s current thinking in sufficient detail to demonstrate their understanding of the problem and the soundness of their approach.

- C. LTRC projects are intended to produce results that will be applied in practice. It is expected that the implementation of the results of this research into practice will evolve as a concerted effort during this project. The final report must contain an implementation plan to include, as a minimum, the following:
 - a. The “product” expected from the research;
 - b. A realistic assessment of impediments to successful implementation;
 - c. The activities necessary for successful implementation; and
 - d. The criteria for judging the progress and consequences of implementation.
- D. To assist in the implementation process, the investigators of this research shall present the final results to LA DOTD/LHSC officials in an oral presentation to be held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana at LA DOTD Headquarters after acceptance of the final report.
- E. The proposal should include travel to meet with the Project Review Committee for a “kick off” meeting, presentation of interim report, and presentation of the final report at a minimum. Funds budgeted for travel shall be limited to what is necessary for the conduct of the research. Funds shall not be budgeted for conference travel.
- F. LTRC’s mission includes the support of higher education in Louisiana. Consultant and out-of-state institutions submitting proposals are encouraged to cooperate and collaborate with Louisiana universities for the purpose of sharing of knowledge and increasing transportation expertise in the academic community.
- G. In addition to the biannual report required in the LTRC Research Manual, progress reports will be submitted at the end of each Task or as directed by the PRC. Progress will be reported in writing and also in presentation, if required.
- H. Graduate assistance stipends are allowed. Tuition reimbursement or tuition remission rates applied to stipends are not allowed.
- I. To equitably answer any questions regarding this Request for Proposals, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) website will be updated with questions and answers and related documents regarding the project.
<http://webmail.dotd.louisiana.gov/agrestat.nsf/WebAdvertisements?OpenPage>
 LA DOTD makes these documents available for informational purposes only to aid in the efficient dissemination of information to interested parties. LA DOTD does not warrant the documents against deficiencies of any kind. The data contained within this web site will be periodically updated. Interested parties are responsible to be aware of any updates. Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing to the LTRC contact person. Questions must be received by close of business seven calendar days prior to deadline date.
- J. Consultants and business entities shall be registered with the Secretary of State in order to be able to work in Louisiana prior to award of contract.
<http://www.sos.la.gov/tabid/1011/Default.aspx>
- K. If Sub-Consultants/Entities are used, the Prime Consultant/Entity must perform a minimum of 51% of the work for the overall project.

ESTIMATED COST OF RESEARCH

\$175,000

ESTIMATED COMPLETION TIME

24 months (*The draft final report is due 21 months after the initiation of the study. The last three months of the contract is for LTRC review and approval of the final report.*)

AUTHORIZATION TO BEGIN WORK

January 2014 (Estimated)

PROPOSAL FORMAT

All proposals must be formatted according to LTRC Manual of Research Procedures, 2003 edition (http://www.ltrc.lsu.edu/pdf/research_man03.pdf).

PROPOSAL SELECTION

The Project Review Committee selected for this project will review, evaluate and rank all proposals received according to the criteria listed in the proposal review form shown in figure 2-6 in the LTRC Manual of Research Procedures.

DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF PROPOSAL

December 6, 2013

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

Ten copies of the proposal must be received by LTRC by close of business Friday, December 6, 2013. Proposals to be submitted to:

Mr. Harold R. Paul, P.E.
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LTRC CONTACT PERSON

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